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AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the second full paragraph on page 4 with the following amended paragraph:

In a preferred embodiment of the apparatus in accordance with the invention the sensor is connected to an a control unit in which data relative to the plate-link chain are stored, and which determines the speed of the plate-link chain by the number of the detected pins and by the time intervals between successive pins. Advantageously, the number of plate links of the plate-link chain and their lengths are stored in the control unit.